



Monday, May 10, 2021
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission

CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Meeting of the South Pasadena Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Kristine Kwong on Monday, May 10, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was held in a virtual setting, with all Commissioners and Council Liaison attending via Zoom.

ROLL CALL

Present: Kristine Kwong Chair, Victoria Rocha Vice-Chair; Dollie Chapman, Commissioner; Alberto Ocon, Commissioner; Karen Tamis, Commissioner.

Absent:

City Staff: Community Services Director Sheila Pautsch, Management Assistant Israel Suarez.

Council Liaison: Councilmembers Jack Donovan; Jon Primuth; Evelyn G. Zneimer; Mayor Pro Tem Michael Cacciotti; and Mayor Diana Mahmud

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received in writing or verbally via zoom.

COMMUNICATIONS

City Council Liaison Communications

Council member Donovan informed the Commission that he was contacted about lighting down at the little league field becoming a safety hazard. After inspection Council Member Donovan informed the Commission that new lights will be installed this week. Additionally, Council Member Donovan added that fields will be open during the day when not reserved.

Commissioner Communications

Commissioner Ocon provided the Commission with an update about the future score board to be installed at Orange Grove. Permits have been pulled and the scoreboard should be finalized by end of May or June 2021.

Commissioner Tamis brought up an issue from a previous Commission meeting about signs at Eddie Park regarding trespassing and private property.

Staff Liaison Communications

Community Services Director had no additional comments left comments to people who want to comment on the pocket parks.

ACTION / DISCUSSION**Presentation and Discussion Regarding the Pocket Parks Concept Design by David Volz Design****Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Commission discuss the two-pocket park designs and gain input from the Community.

David Volz and Gary Vasquez from David Volz design presented the conceptual designs for the two pocket parks at Berkshire and Grevelia.

Regular Parks and Recreation Meeting E-Mail Public Comments

Mary Urquhart

My name is Mary Urquhart and I live at 1210 Chelton Way and would like to make some comments regarding agenda item #5.

The designs by David Volz look fabulous. I want to commend Sheila Pautsch and her team for putting this together. I do have a couple of questions and requests for the pocket park on Berkshire:

1. Will the large tree remain? I hope so. In addition, there are some orange trees at the far end of the property and I do hope that they remain as well.
2. Currently, this area is an eyesore to the neighborhood and potentially could harbor unwanted rodents, etc...Is it possible to clean this area up as soon as possible?
3. I understand that naming this pocket park is not under the jurisdiction of this commission. However, I do hope that long-time resident and activist Beatriz Solis may be under consideration. She tirelessly advocated for open spaces for residents.

It is also my understanding that these parks can be completed in a year with the support of the Public Works Department and I urge them to actively pursue bids to make this happen.

It gives me great hope to see this coming to fruition and it is only done through cooperative and organized efforts by both the Parks & Recreation Department and this terrific commission.

Thank you!

City of South Pasadena

Mary Urquhart

Keith Novak,

Sheila,

I'd like to know if one of the pocket parks could include a community garden with it. I have been a member of the South Pasadena Community Garden since its inception in 1995. It has been an extremely successful venture. The garden has provided a great way to beautify an empty lot, grow vegetables, flowers and fruits, and develop a sense of community among the gardeners.

Thanks,

- Keith

A few more reasons why we support an additional garden:

1. The South Pasadena Community Garden almost always has a waitlist. Earlier this year, we had 16 people waiting to garden.
2. Since the pandemic, more people have turned to gardening as a safe, outdoor, healthy activity.
3. The garden provides South Pasadenans, especially residents in condos and apartments, access to gardening and organic food.
4. Community gardens build communities and social networks.
5. Community gardens promote seasonal eating, access to healthy food options, and greater understanding of our food ecosystem.

Everyone who wants to should have the opportunity to garden and grow their own food.

Theresa Miles

That is a stupid idea to make a park at these locations. Sell these lots and get some tax revenue for everyone in our city. Please stop wasting money.

Thank you

Terri Miles
Delaine Shane

Dear Ms. Pautsch:

City of South Pasadena

Thank you for alerting us regarding the update on the pocket parks to be presented by Mr. Volz tonight. So many of us in and around the vacant lot at Berkshire have been waiting a long time for this property to become a park.

The last time it was discussed a few years ago, if I recall correctly, the price tag was well over \$400,000. My suggestion is that the project be phased into small, achievable goals. Each phase building onto the next. It can't be that expensive to have the weeds removed on a weekly or biweekly schedule, install some temporary boundary fencing (chain-link with a mesh screen) to provide privacy to the adjacent neighbors, park benches, picnic table, trash can, and some signage. That clearly wouldn't cost \$400,000+. Over time, more amenities could be added based on fund raising, grants, or City directed funds. Perhaps Council Member Donovan could provide some discretionary funds towards this endeavor with the support of the other council members. Perhaps the South Pasadena Beautiful organization could also step in and help to some extent.

Meanwhile, during the City's first draft of the General Plan Update released a few years ago, the document identified and counted this vacant lot as a fully developed pocket park. We all know that is not reality. Until there is some improvements made, we on the southern portion of the City have ZERO park amenities available to us.

Finally, whoever in the City monitors the contract gardeners needs to know and rectify that the lot on Berkshire is weedy again and has been for a couple of months now. It is not safe from a wildfire standpoint, it is disrespectful to our neighborhood, and it just shows complete neglect by the City. It also is a double standard of unfairness, i.e., residents must clear their lots of weeds, but the City gets a pass.

Let's move forward even with some small, basic steps. Please send my comments to all of the Parks and Recreation Commissioners for their discussion and consideration.

Thank you.

Delaine Shane
2003 Meridian Avenue

Regular Commission Meeting Public Comments

Jasmine Forrest- Excited about the pocket park being developed. Looking forward to the kids play spaces, green areas, and art pieces.

Ty lei- Had a question regarding the walking path at Grevelia.

Chester Kano- Had questions regarding the property line, fence, trashcans and if there will be drinking fountains at the parks.

Sally Howard- Expressed concerns regarding Berkshire park regarding retaining wall and lighting. Additionally added, in support of the pocket park.

Erin Mascho- Expressed her support of the park and suggesting adding a community garden to one of the pocket parks.

Sam Quinones- Is in support of the pocket parks and suggested that they add workplace infrastructure instead of benches at one of the pocket parks.

Esmeralda Montoya- Question if there is a hedge or divider on the East Side of Grevelia Park.

Andrew Blaiklock- Expressed concerns about unhoused individuals congregating at the pocket parks. Requested that no trail be installed. Additionally, stated that it is a good area to make a park for kids to play.

Celina McHugh Dedois- Asked if there was going to be a fence installed at Berkshire park if so, how tall and what kind?

Linda Krausen- Live next to grevelia street park. Mentioned the area has changed significantly since the pocket park inception. Condos do not have a lot of children. Most frequent visitors to park are adult dog owners. Bushes put up at the front of the park.

John Vandercook- Appreciates the Commission and team for presenting the concept of green open space for the South Pasadena community. Additionally asked, are there grant opportunities for funding? What are park designated hours? With the lighting can these parks include any sort of visual security cameras.

Wong- Nearby resident to Berkshire Park expressed admiration towards the conceptual drawings and stated kids would love the park.

Larry Abelson- Wanted to thank staff and commission and everyone involved for the designs and creation of pocket parks. Requested residents be able to submit written comments that we can take into consideration. Lastly, requested the commission keep in mind parking and traffic issues.

Ali and Mike Schon- Expressed their excitement about the Pocket Parks.

Delaine Shane- Thinks both of the pocket park designs are lovely. Would look forward to the pocket park as a recreation space. Expressed concerns about park closing time hours. Would be useful to hear from neighborhoods in the surrounding homes.

Commissioner Comments

Chair Kwong asked Volz What is the timeline for the completion of these two pocket parks? Kwong requested that feedback and comments from the community is taken into consideration. Kwong expressed concerns pertaining to potential noise and traffic congestion. Kwong also added of adding outdoor workout equipment at the pocket parks. Lastly, Chair Kwong thanked community residents for participating and providing feedback.

Vice-Chair Rocha asked Volz and Director Pautsch, how were these locations selected? Rocha commented on the circular path at grevilia street park and if there were any strong feelings or discussion points about bringing that back. Commented that the circular path would take away from the green space open play area at the park. Lastly, Vice-Chair Rocha asked if there are other greenbelts in the city that can be considered for future development of a community garden?

Commissioner Chapman commented that she is pleased to see the design of the two pocket parks and will be great asset to the surrounding neighborhoods. She added it will be a benefit to the community, and David Volz has a very good design. Lastly Commissioner Chapman thanked the community for the input and mentioned it will be taken into consideration.

Commissioner Tamis commented that she is excited to see where the plans are at. Tamis mentioned that the Commission spoke with the family of Beatriz Solis and they are going to honor her at one of the pocket parks. Tamis added that thought should be considered to adding a community garden including asking Volz if a community garden was feasible.

Commissioner Ocon thanked the community for the input and participating. Ocon mentioned that the Commission will take into consideration the community concerns.

This item will be brought back at the June 14, 2021 Commission meeting for final recommendations.

Approval of the April 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Chapman, seconded by Commissioner Ocon. The motion carries 5 – 0 to approve the April 12, 2021 meeting minutes.

Discussion and Recommendation to install Dispense Shield in City Parks

John Adamson CEO of Dispense Shield presented product to the Commission that holds hand sanitizer and insect repellant. There is no fiscal impact to the City and the advertising product will assist in promoting local businesses during this pandemic.

Chair Kwong commented the product is intriguing however, the sign is rather large for a government space and it looks like a form of branding.

Commissioner Tamis commented that it looks as if parks are being sponsored by businesses.

Chair Kwong motioned for John to come back with different sizes and options to showcase to the Commission. Seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The motion carries 4-1 to bring back Dispense Shield with different sizes and options.

Summer Event Subcommittee discussion and recommendation on Summer events and activities

Community Services Director Pautsch provided an, update regarding upcoming summer events. Additionally, she informed the Commission of updated Los Angeles County COVID-19 regulations.

Summer Events

Concerts in the Park July 25 and August 8 at Orange Grove Park (bands TBA)

Movies in the Park July 16 (Onward) and July 30 (Abominable)

Summer Camp starts July 6, 2021

National Night Out August 3, 2021 at Orange Grove

Motion by Chair Kwong, seconded by Vice-Chair Rocha. The motion carries 5-0 to move forward with summer events and activities.

ADJOURNMENT Meeting adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Next meeting June 14, 2021 6:30 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were adopted by the Parks and Recreation Commission of South Pasadena at a meeting held on May 10, 2021.

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Israel Suarez

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Israel Suarez

Management Assistant

DocuSigned by:

Kristine Kwong

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Kristine Kwong

Chair of Parks and Recreation Commissions